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ABSTRACT

The impact of variables such as personal affiliation with a community program and degree of local autonomy on resident perspectives, specifically those pertaining to community feelings, issues of efficacy, and community control, are examined in order to provide the target populations attitudes and perceptions. This paper intends to demonstrate the need to juxtapose the relevant attitudes and perceptions of affected residents alongside primarily political factors in evaluating the potential viability of community control. Three low income New York City districts peopled predominantly by blacks and Puerto Ricans compose the sample. Results reflect general support for community control in principle and a desire to share decision making powers with non-residents. Significant differences in viewpoint are associated with type of program affiliation: resident staff, program clients, and general community inhabitants. Degree of local autonomy bears little relevance. Provisional support for an overlap model of community control is provided, based on political feasibility and positive resident feelings in the context of a cooperative working relationship with outsiders. (Author/AM)

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COMMUNITY CONTROL: A STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

by

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ABSTRACT

The term community control generally indicates a degree of self-determination by residents of communities within urban areas. Although evaluation researchers of resulting programs have remarked upon the political intransigence of local agencies and governmental bodies, the perspectives of affected residents have not been systematically studied. In this paper, we examine the attitudes and perceptions of persons in three low income sections of New York City as they pertain to communal affiliation, efficacy, and community control. Results reflect general support for community control in principle and a desire to share decision-making powers with non-residents. Significant differences in viewpoint are associated with type of program affiliation: resident staff, program clients, and general community inhabitants. Degree of local autonomy, however, bears minimal relevance. Provisional support for an overlap model of community control is provided based on political feasibility and positive resident feelings in the context of a cooperative working relationship with outsiders.

Community Control: Evaluations and Perspectives

Although the catchword "community control" seems to have fallen into disfavor, the school busing controversy reminds us that local autonomy as an issue is still of paramount importance. Once again, we find local residents wanting to be involved politically in matters which they consider to be of crucial importance. In spite of differences in substance, the broader demand clearly remains: a degree of self-determination by communities within urban areas. In South Boston (Massachusetts), for example, residents apparently do not simply want their children to attend neighborhood schools; the conflict seems to stem as much over the right to determine whether children are to be bused. There is, indeed, a local history of voluntarily sending youngsters to parochial schools outside the community boundaries.[1] This continuing controversy forces us to turn anew to the lessons of the community control programs developed in the last decade.

During this period, there emerged movements on both local and national levels favoring community control. As residents from low income areas were clamoring for control of resources and authority, the federal government was developing strategies to allow the disaffected a degree of local autonomy. Among these were the Community Action and Model Cities Programs. The former, in particular, were intended to stress local involvement through "maximum feasible participation." What has flowed from the evaluative research is a disquieting assessment in which serious definitional questions are raised and only minimal to moderate program success is noted. To understand these considerations more fully, we should like to add a third realm for study, the perspectives of residents in target areas. Accordingly, the intent of this paper is to demonstrate the need to juxtapose the relevant attitudes and perceptions of affected residents alongside primarily political factors in evaluating the potential viability of community control.

With regard to definitions, it is evident that the term "community control" is frequently used with minimal attention to its symbolic significance. As Altshuler (1970:56-59) observes, this concept is sometimes mistakenly treated as a synonym for such disparate ideas as integration, separatism, and segregation. For example, he notes a Gallup poll conducted in 1969 which assumes that rejection of integration is associated with a desire for local control. Respondents are asked whether they desire autonomy as defined by operating schools and businesses as opposed to integrating. It is conceivable, however, that many might want local control in an integrated context.

Another ambiguous usage of community control relates to its identification with decentralization. Although the devolution of organizational units from a centralized location to local areas is clearly involved, it is critical that one differentiate between administrative and political decentralization, only the latter specifying a shift in power (cf. Fantini and Gittell, 1973; Altshuler, 1970). We shall define community control as a modicum of autonomy over decision making and use of resources by the residents of a sub-area within a larger urban unit. This control is usually conceived as involving a limited sphere, such as educational or police matters.[2]

In addition to the concern with the meanings of community control, evaluation researchers emphasize the political obstacles to an expression of area autonomy. They report that experiments in community control tend to fail because the power necessary to bring about change through social action is not, in fact, transferred to low income groups (cf. Aleshire, 1972; Marris and Rein, 1973; Rose, 1972). Instead, governmental units and existing community agencies receive most of the funds and determine their use (Aleshire, 1972: 438-439; Rein, 1968:4-6). In this regard, the minimal success of Model Cities and Community Action Programs (CAP) is viewed as a result of govern-

mental intransigence, not the apathy of the poor (Rein, 1968:4).

Rose (1972) in his evaluation of CAPs in twenty sample cities contends that the basic difficulty develops between the theoretical planning and the operationalized form of the programs. The architects of the strategy are portrayed as conceiving poverty as a consequence of a dysfunctional social system characterized by inequities. The solution consists of a combination of greater opportunities and power for the impoverished. Accordingly, programs needed include consumer action, community development, employment, and resident participation. However, the majority of projects in the cities surveyed are oriented toward social service, not institutional change; only 3% of the programs in all cities serve this latter end. In none of the cases do the poor participate as initiators or planners; eighty percent of the projects are operated by existing community agencies (Rose, 1972:130-136, 138-142). The evaluation experts conclude that the planners of the federal government's experiments in area autonomy do not comprehend the basic conflict between interest groups and the unwillingness of the powerful to be altruistic (cf. Marris and Rein, 1973:54-55).

These brief comments on community control programs should not be construed as indicating total failure. There are a number of published materials that report modest gains as a consequence of such programs. Hallman (1972: 424) states, for example, that the Community Action Programs are responsible for citizen participation and the development of citizen organizations in urban and rural poverty areas. Similarly, Austin (1972:418-419) maintains that in spite of minimal institutional change, such programs broaden resident participation and lead to increased interest in local politics. Finally, in assessing community control in New York City, Gittell (1972:680-681) concludes that participation and concern over local problems are significantly

increased even though major power transfers fail to materialize.

Although the contributions of these various researchers are valuable, their concerns are directed primarily to varying images of community control and the political problems encountered. As stressed earlier, one area that has not received systematic consideration is that of resident perspectives. We believe that this neglected domain should be explored for a number of reasons. First, community control as a principle stresses a consideration of the target population's viewpoint. Even when those affected are not to be given control of resources (as in administrative decentralization), concern for developing programs responsive to local needs should be expressed.

A second reason for ascertaining resident attitudes and perceptions is to understand more fully the realm of the unknown. On a theoretical level, Merton (1968, 1972) suggests that there is the problem of the different kinds of knowledge available to the insider (in this case the community resident) and to the outsider (who generally resides outside the area boundaries). The insider is able to bring to bear special understandings as a result of his life experiences. On the other hand, the outsider as a stranger often can penetrate an ideological barrier that shields the inhabitants from awareness. Merton suggests that understanding is most likely to develop when interaction takes place between supposed divergent perspectives such that acquaintance or experience can mix with knowledge or awareness.

The problem as we view it is that there has been a significant imbalance which finds the community outsider, whether on territorial or ideological bases, playing the major role in determining both the form and content of community control. This imbalance is especially important due to the oft limited awareness of such persons with regard to internal problems.[3] It is this narrow perspective of the outsider combined with the minimal focus on

the community insider that elevates the latter's perspective to a position of prominence in this study.[4]

Apart from the theoretical value of examining the residents' perspectives, there is a very practical one. Little information, if any, is available to inform us of the attitudes of such people toward the important issues of community control, its preferred form, and the degree of their trust in program staff who reside in and outside the local area. Strange (1972:662-663), for example, emphasizes that evaluation researchers should develop sample surveys to ascertain residents' views and wants. A similar proposal is suggested by Lazar (1969) who focuses on determining inhabitants' feelings toward control: who should participate and in what realms. Results might well indicate that the residents desire a form of control which does not seriously threaten the existing power structure. It is conceivable that they would prefer a type which allows for a more cooperative relationship with outsiders. Thus, although the political realities may well dictate participation that would not stress institutional reform, area inhabitants might accept a more limited involvement and program of change.

Having reviewed the political concerns raised in the evaluation research on community control and having stressed the need for surveys pertaining to resident perspectives, we should now ground these views in the community control experience. In this regard, two critical variables are type of personal affiliation with the programs and degree of local autonomy. With the former, attention is to be given to the differential beliefs held by resident staff, program clients, and by the general community (those who have no contact with projects but live within the geographical confines of the area). Studying this last group is especially important since it affords us an opportunity to compare their views with individuals associated with the projects

and to understand the opinions of persons constituting the major segment of the population. Our focus on variations in degree of local control is designed to provide information on the effectiveness of autonomy and on the potential impact of obstacles to its implementation.

Specifically, our intent is to ascertain the impact of these two variables on resident perspectives, specifically those pertaining to community feelings, issues of efficacy, and community control. The first set of factors is formed of perceived levels of community identification, shared attitudes toward common area problems (i.e., perceived solidarity), and differences in standard or way of living as compared to other residents (i.e., social differentiation). The second group of variables includes perceived individual ability and need to influence local decision-making processes along with a subjective assessment by area residents of the capabilities or resources that could potentially be tapped. Feelings about community control involve degree of support for area autonomy and the particular form it should take, assumptions about staff attitudes toward community residents, and degrees of faith placed in resident and non-resident personnel.[5]

From a consideration of these attitudes and perceptions in conjunction with mode of control and type of affiliation there evolve a number of specific concerns. We would want to determine whether community control is associated with a greater sense of communal attachment, a favorable assessment of efficacy, and positive feelings with regard to local autonomy. For example, our expectation would be for residents of areas experiencing community control (in contrast to those who do not) to express greater support for this notion, demand more complete local control, and indicate comparatively greater faith in their own resident staff than in outsiders. As to affiliation, it would seem essential to discover whether association with programs is identified

with more positive feelings than those expressed by general community residents. To illustrate, it is conceivable that persons in the broader community might express low levels of faith in the staff regardless of residency, particularly if they are not knowledgeable about the programs.

Finally, additional issues are raised when we focus on feelings of communal attachment and efficacy as they relate to trust of personnel. For instance, perceptions of social differentiation would be expected to result in low levels of faith in all staff. Those who view themselves as being in a life situation differing from other residents (either higher or lower) might tend to view the personnel as not representing their interests. Also, those questioning their own capabilities could be inclined to allow competent outsiders the right to guide them. And it is crucial that we comprehend the circumstances under which residents are likely to desire involvement in decision-making processes. Those who are the least and most trustful might feel the greatest need to influence, the former to maintain the status quo, the latter to bring about change (Gamson, 1968:154). However, this statement of association assumes solidary groups, a requisite which may not be present in certain groups or be dependent on other factors. Clearly, the planning of future programs in citizen participation must be based, at least in part, on residents' views within the context of differential affiliation and of variant modes of area control.

Community Education Centers

The data for this study were gathered in 1970 while the author was a consultant to a university in New York City that was responsible for evaluating state supported community control projects in ten school districts in the City. These Community Education Center (CEC) programs were funded through the State

Office of Urban Education and were designed to deliver instructional services while providing for the health, social, and welfare needs of area residents. Beyond providing resident clients opportunities in such programs as adult education, day care, art, and interim schools for suspended pupils, the centers were theoretically planned to allow resident staff to participate on both professional and paraprofessional levels. The local communities, then, were to have a significant degree of fiscal and political control over the selection and operation of specific projects.

The importance of autonomy was paramount; at the time that these limited programs were initiated in 1968, the broader struggle over community control of education had been raging for two years, dating from the time parents and community leaders of Harlem demanded participation in the operation of a local school. It is in the context of this spreading controversy involving local, city, and state educational and political bodies and of the growing distrust of outsiders by area residents that our study was undertaken.

Thus, there were in the areas under study two potential sources of community control, through school political mobilization and through the semi-autonomous Community Education Centers. In the former, the struggle led to the creation of model demonstration districts in Harlem, the lower East Side, and Ocean Hill-Brownsville; these areas were to have a modicum of control over local educational programs. The issue of control was especially visible in Ocean Hill where three school strikes and extensive coverage by the national media tended to render it a matter of major community importance. Although an on-going conflict developed with the central Board of Education and local teacher's union over such issues as hiring personnel and setting salaries, these areas seemed to be characterized by a greater sense of community concern and involvement (Gittell, 1972:680-681).

In a parallel development, the Community Education Centers were organized in 1968 to allow for local control apart from the educational establishment. In practice, however, the funding policy specified that the Board of Education would be responsible for channeling resources to the CECs. Thus, where local education was under central control, resident decision-making powers in the CECs tended to be minimal. Even in the model demonstration districts in which these programs were generally planned by the same area authorities, community control was severely limited due to constant struggles with the Board of Education. As Gittell (1972:679) notes, the local authorities developed a broad interpretation of their powers, the Board a narrow one. Politically, what we observe seems to support the findings that evaluation researchers report for federally funded programs. In theory, political decentralization was the goal set by the New York State Legislature. However, in practice the educational establishment effectively maintained its control through an unwillingness to transfer power to local areas. It was not uncommon for the CECs to find that they had little influence over funding, hiring and firing employees, and programming (Perkinson, 1970:102). In Ocean Hill-Brownsville, for instance, the planning director accused the Board of Education of withdrawing funds without community consultation and of establishing rigid positional requirements thus minimizing community participation; at one point, he requested that the State provide a representative to block the Board from wielding the power that had been theoretically placed in local communities (Daniels, 1970:225-226).

In spite of the political barriers, the Community Education Centers associated with the model demonstration districts experienced a slightly greater degree of autonomy than those affiliated with the central Board. Hence, in our investigation, one of these "community control" districts was selected

to determine whether resident views might vary significantly from those expressed in sections where local control was essentially absent.

Methodology and Procedures

The districts selected for observation were the Brooklyn communities of Bedford Stuyvesant and Ocean Hill-Brownsville and a section of the South Bronx. The first two areas were peopled predominantly by Blacks, with a sizeable Puerto Rican population; the third area was primarily Puerto Rican with a large Black contingent. All three were known as low income districts. These communities were chosen because they allowed for drawing ethnic comparisons as well as for contrasting experiences with political decentralization. Ocean Hill-Brownsville was one of the model demonstration school districts while the others were under more centralized control. Further, Ocean Hill and Bedford Stuyvesant were geographical neighbors with fairly similar population characteristics (i.e., income, education, and ethnicity). Thus, we were able to measure varying modes of area control through selecting Ocean Hill which had a modicum of autonomy and through choosing two districts which had a minimal degree.

As to the selection of respondents, our focal concern called for the inclusion of persons with varying affiliations with the Community Education Centers. In the three school districts all clients and local staff were drawn into the study. For the community-at-large, a multi-stage cluster probability sample was incorporated, using the geographic blocks of each area as the initial universe. Through the use of a systematic probability sample, a small percentage of these was retained. The New York City Multiple Dwelling Unit Reference List for 1969 was consulted to obtain a listing of buildings located on each of the sample blocks. A compilation was made of

all housing units in the various buildings. Structures containing commercial tenants only were excluded. A second sample was drawn at this time using the buildings as the new universe. The final step consisted of utilizing the housing units of selected buildings as the population. Hence the staging process proceeded from city blocks to buildings and finally to individual apartment units. The response rates for the resultant samples ranged from 74%-85% with no substitutions. Overall, the case selection (total N=625) included: 1. resident staff (N=151) associated with the programs; 2. clients (N=166), district residents enrolled in the various projects; and 3. general community members (N=308) living in the areas who were not affiliated with the Community Education Centers.

In terms of demographic characteristics of our total case selection, 53% of the respondents were Black, 35% Puerto Rican, and 12% White, figures corresponding to the area proportions. With regard to type of affiliation, we found that the staff tended to have higher incomes and to be better educated. Twenty-two percent of the staff in contrast to 10% of the clients and 4% of the general community had total family incomes in excess of $10,000; in general, only 9% of the respondents were at this high level, with one-third having incomes under $4,000. As to education, 41% of the staff and 5% each of the clients and general community had some collegiate experience.[6] Overall, only 13% of the respondents fit into this category. And 40% had not gone beyond junior high school.[7] Information was gathered primarily through the use of a fixed-alternative questionnaire. Additional material was generated by having each project director provide information on the degree of local control.

In the analysis, we commence with a brief consideration of attitudes and perceptions involving community feelings, efficacy, and community control in

association with the two major factors of varied degrees of autonomy (in the school districts) and type of respondent affiliation. Each of these is, in turn, analyzed in multivariate form to ascertain the possible impact of income, education, ethnicity, and length of residence on the main relationships. Emphasis is then placed on the manner in which community feelings and efficacy relate to community control variables, stressing their impact on trust of Community Education Center personnel. In these various associations, all respondents are included unless otherwise noted. Our final concern is then to determine the implications of our findings for community control with regard to resident perspectives and political feasibility.

Resident Perspectives

In beginning this section, we want first to examine community feelings: identification, perceived solidarity, and subjective expressions of social differentiation. As shown in table 1, there is a marked tendency for resident staff

(Table 1 about here)

to experience the highest levels of positive communal attachment (as measured by the degree to which an individual feels himself to be a part of the local community), the program clients somewhat lower levels, and the general community residents the lowest. It is also clear, however, that the overall level of identification is fairly high as reflected by 80% of the general community sample expressing some sense of attachment. With regard to perceived solidarity (i.e., the degree to which residents are seen as sharing the same attitudes toward common problems) and social differentiation (i.e., perceived standard or way of living compared to other residents), there are no significant distinctions by type of affiliation. Generally, respondents tend to express a high level of solidarity (80%) and to view themselves as being similar to others.[8] Furthermore, none of the three variables constituting community feeling correlates with district

variations in local autonomy. When we incorporate education, income, ethnicity, and length of area residence as test factors, there are no meaningful changes occurring in the original associations.

As for the question of efficacy, perceived ability to influence is operationalized by asking respondents to indicate the level of influence they believe they and others in their community are able to exert. Capability reflects perceptions relating to the skills which could be brought to bear if individuals were given the opportunity. Need to influence is measured by asking how important it is for the respondent and others in the area to affect decisions made in community control programs. Generally, responses reflect a sense of control over the environment. Relatively, however, there are variations in two of these factors as they correlate with other variables. Specifically, with capability there is no association with type of affiliation nor with the mode of district control. In contrast, ability and need to influence are both related to type of affiliation (but not control forms). As expected, the staff express the highest levels on both variables (85% and 72% respectively) with the program clients being slightly lower (69% and 62%); the general community respondents exhibit the lowest degrees (57% on high ability and 28% on high need to influence). Surprisingly, the controversy over community control in Ocean Hill does not seem to be reflected in more positive feelings on these two factors.

To determine whether the differences between the groupings are actually a function of upper income (staff) versus lower income (general community), we need to incorporate this third variable as a test factor. As table 2 reflects, the overall high perceived ability of the staff is not affected by income. The pattern is basically the same for the clients with the

(Table 2 about here)

exception of the 56% for the middle income grouping. For the residents not affiliated with CEC projects, however, there is clearly an effect on perceived ability as income increases. The high degree of competence experienced by the staff and clients is probably due either to a prior belief which led to their involvement or to their positive experiences within the Community Education Center programs. With need to influence, the effect of income is essentially comparable. The one difference is that there is some variation between the community groups at the highest income level.

In examining other potentially relevant variables, we find that among education, ethnicity, mode of district control, and length of residence, only the last exerts significant impact. For both ability and need to influence, residential permanency has the most salience for the general community grouping. As permanence develops, there are concomitant increases in the upper levels of these two variables. On the other hand, the staff and client views are minimally affected. Moreover, length of residence does not exhibit as pronounced a leveling influence as does income.

At this point, we turn to the third set of factors, attitudes and perceptions relating to community control: support for local autonomy and its ideal form, projected staff feelings, and levels of trust in resident and non-resident CEC staff. Most favor community control in principle (as measured by expressed support for this idea). However, there are important relative distinctions when we incorporate type of affiliation. Although at least 70% of respondents in all categories indicate some support (in table 3), we must focus on the general community's lower level of commitment; twenty-nine percent of this grouping acknowledge only minimal support in contrast

(Table 3 about here)

to 9% of the clients and 5% of the staff.

In addition to a general desire for community control, we find that at least two-thirds of the respondents prefer a combined mode of control in which both area residents and outsiders share in decision-making processes and the operation of the programs; of the remainder, approximately 5% want total non-resident control and 28% complete local autonomy.[9] Clearly, the residents want power; what is surprising is their overall willingness to enter into a cooperative venture with outsiders. Of course, we must entertain the possibility that there could be significant differences by actual mode of district control or type of affiliation. Indeed, there is some effect on the part of the former although only a slight one by the latter. In Ocean Hill-Brownsville 42% of all the respondents desire total local autonomy in contrast to 30% in the South Bronx and 26% in Bedford Stuyvesant. Furthermore, there is a slightly greater degree of very high support for community control in this district (37%) than in the other two (both 26%). When we examine support for local control in conjunction with its ideal form, we find that strongly favoring control is associated with a preference for total local autonomy (i.e., 43% of those expressing the most commitment in contrast to 16% indicating the least support).[10] However, at the lowest levels of support only 4%-8% want power to rest outside the area.[11] Although these data generally reflect a somewhat greater commitment by Ocean Hill to community control in the form of complete local autonomy, nonetheless, the more striking finding is the support expressed for a combined mode of control.

From the above responses, the allegation (Altshuler, 1970:19-34) that residents would want to isolate their community from the wider urban circle does not seem to be justified. Their expressed need to have competent non-

residents work with them would appear to make such projects more feasible in terms of expertise and to allow for lines of communication to be developed between these districts and the larger governmental system. In this way, a combined mode of control could allow for the development of programs that would incorporate the views of area residents, provide for outside expertise, and maintain the legitimacy and integration of the political institutions.[12]

The feasibility of this decision-making approach can be evaluated further through an examination of the respondents' trust of program personnel. This variable is operationalized by asking whether the respondent believes that local community people working for the CEC are looking out for the community's interests; for non-resident staff trust, a similar measure is used specifying non-resident status. The data reveal that most residents express either medium or high degrees of trust (74%) in both local and external staff. Probably most pertinent is the similarity in the faith placed in the two. To understand more fully the dynamics, however, we need to identify the perspectives involved (table 4). Varying levels of trust are exhibited depending upon

(Table 4 about here)

one's relationship to the community control programs. Local staff, for example, evidence the greatest trust in local personnel. However, it is illuminating to note that they also express the most confidence (85%) in non-resident staff in comparison with the clients and those from the general community.[13] This finding might well mean that interaction with others is conducive to understanding and, therefore, to generating trust. The local personnel are most likely to deal with outside staff on a regular basis and, thus, have the situational opportunity to know them on a personal as opposed to stereotypical basis.[14] Moreover, there is likely to develop a shared commitment to similar goals and activities.

Both those served by the projects (i.e., clients) and the non-user members of the general community express a lower level of faith in outsiders. The former, however, approach the staff level, probably for the same basic reasons mentioned above. The latter cohort, in contrast to the staff respondents and clients, evidences relatively low degrees of confidence in both categories of personnel, with an equal level of distrust. This situation is not unexpected given the lack of participation, either involuntary or by choice, and the resultant lack of direct knowledge of project personnel.

Surprisingly, there is no appreciable difference in trust placed in both staff groupings when we examine the findings separately for the three districts. Our initial expectation of variations due to Ocean Hill-Brownsville's experimental status and the residents' probable desire for greater autonomy is not borne out by the data. One explanation for this situation is that the local autonomy in Ocean Hill might be viewed by resident administrators more as the right to select personnel than the need to limit participation to those who assumedly would have special insights, the residents. Indeed, of the three districts studied, the percentage of "outsiders" employed is highest in that community.[15] Most importantly, such persons tend to be professionals in decision-making positions.

This interpretation receives added support from Arnstein (1972: 377-390); through her article, the resident participants in the Philadelphia Model Cities program are given an opportunity to communicate their perceptions of the successes and obstacles which they experience. Although they express, for the most part, anger toward the existing governmental order, they also stress that a number of outsiders are drawn officially and informally into their program and make major contributions in the realms of organization and planning.

An examination of potentially relevant test factors reveals only the importance of income for the variables pertaining to community control. With support for local autonomy, as a case in point, the differences between the staff, clients, and general community residents are most pronounced at the lowest income level (i.e., under $4,000). As income increases, the distinctions between these groups lessen, although not completely. For those affiliated with the programs, self-selected involvement or positive experiences within the CEC are most relevant; whereas for the general community, support varies concomitantly with income. Similar findings obtain when we dwell upon resident and non-resident trust. For the project affiliates, faith tends to be high regardless of income; as to the remaining group, trust covaries with income.[16] Indeed, we find overall that low resource levels are associated with relatively negative findings toward the community, efficacy, and the desire for involvement and trust. These results are crucial for they are indicative of a greater sense of powerlessness on the part of the poor; the people primarily targeted for the programs are, consequently, the most hostile and suspicious.

Resident Perspectives and Trust

At this juncture, we should like to emphasize the interrelationships between community feelings and efficacy as they relate to the community control factor of trust. Degrees of faith placed in persons are clearly critical in weighing the political feasibility of local autonomy and determining type of resident involvement. In turning initially to an analysis of social differentiation, we remark (in table 5) that higher levels of local trust are articulated by those perceiving the same or a higher standard of

(Table 5 about here)

living in contrast to the least faith by those in the lowest position. The appearance of the greatest trust by the middle group can probably be explained by the tendency of local staff members to express both high trust and a perceived similarity to other community staff. This interpretation is given support when we use type of affiliation as a test factor (table 6). Project personnel are characterized by both high trust and a view of social sameness (57%) in contrast to the general community sample in which the linear

(Table 6 about here)

relationship is quite clear.[17] Perceived differences, then, serve to engender minimal trust when the standard of living is seen as lower than the particular reference group.[18]

Having discussed the relevance of capability and need to influence as they relate to type of affiliation and mode of district control, we now investigate, separately, the importance of these first two factors with regard to levels of trust. We are surprised to discover that faith in one's capacities is associated with high levels of trust of non-community personnel. The initial expectation was based on the assumption that those viewing themselves as having few resources would be willing to allow qualified outsiders to aid them. Instead, it would appear that self-confidence may be conducive to viewing such persons as posing a minimal threat to competent individuals in control of their environment. When this interpretation is integrated with the variable of trust, we might well expect the staff to express their relatively high level of perceived personal competence, as compared to the general community sample, through a willingness to cooperate with personnel living outside the local area.

To examine the validity of this approach, we much contend with a possible "professionalization of reform" ideology operating within these projects, that is, resident professionals trusting non-resident professionals. As described by Helfgot (1974:489-490), this concept involves the belief that reform must come about through external pressure and through the involvement of professionally trained staff. One characteristic, then, is an emphasis on academic expertise which often restricts upper level participation by individuals living in poverty areas. Indeed, we have remarked upon the disproportionately high educational level of the resident staff studied in our analysis. This result is not surprising in that the central board of education stipulated strict requirements for the positions. However, it is essential that we call attention to the fact that only 10% of the resident staff are classified as professionals (e.g., teachers). In focusing, then, on a second common characteristic of professionalization, the involvement of minority elites to legitimate the organization's community participation status, we do not simply find local professionals expressing faith in outside professionals. Rather the trust placed in the non-resident staff is expressed primarily by paraprofessionals and, further, faith does not vary by occupational status.

In examining the impact of trust on need to influence, we find with regard to both staff groupings that the greatest desire to affect decision-making is characteristic of those expressing the highest levels of trust. When the type of affiliation is incorporated as a test factor, the main associations are essentially maintained. However, the lower trust and need to influence on the part of the general community are clear in both resident and non-resident staff associations. This most probably reflects the low socio-economic status and high rate of transiency characteristic of this segment.

As noted earlier, Gamson (1968:154) argues that the most and least trustful are likely to want to influence decision-making. A critical element is that these be solidary groups. However, our findings reflect the least trustful as tending to have the lowest levels of community identification and expressions of solidarity. An additional element of relevance is the assumed degree of staff concern for area residents. We find that lack of self-confidence and fears of negative staff feeling are related to minimal trust and a minimal need to affect decisions. Substantively, it would appear that the concomitant variation between high trust and a strong need to influence is probably due to factors other than solely a desire by solidary groups to support the existing leadership. These additional elements include positive attitudes regarding control of the environment (i.e., an ability to work effectively with staff both from within and outside the community) and a belief that influence is likely to be effective within the context of positive staff feelings toward the residents. This concern with trust is deemed especially critical since the highest levels of satisfaction with community control are expressed by those experiencing the most faith in the personnel. What we must do at this juncture is to examine the consequences for control which flow from these observations.[19]

Community Control: The Unility of the Overlap Model

In this concluding section, we attempt to draw together our findings and offer support for a model of community control that would appear to be feasible within the context of both political realities and resident viewpoints. Overall, we stress the generally moderate to high levels of communal attachment, efficacy, and support of community control and related variables expressed by our respondents. What is most important, though, is the support

given by all groups to the idea of local autonomy (70%) and to a combined mode of control; clearly the people want to work cooperatively with outsiders. It is also to be stressed that this attitude is associated with a feeling of competence. Those expressing capability and trust and perceiving positive staff feelings toward residents are the ones who most want to be involved.

There are, however, important relative differences between groups experiencing varying links with the Community Education Centers. On most factors the staff and clients indicate much more favorable attitudes and perceptions. For example, although the general community residents share with staff and clients a belief in a cooperative form of local autonomy, they are not as committed to this concept; this may be due to the first two sets of factors (i.e., community feelings and perceived environmental control) which are apparently related, in part, to the respondents' low economic position. It is also conceivable that their attitudes are a function of relatively negative experiences with the CEC program. However, only 12% of the general community sample acknowledge any familiarity with the overall program.[20] Thus, major problems involve a lack of communication as to program availability along with less support for community control and relatively minimal trust in resident and non-resident personnel.

Surprisingly, the low level of awareness is applicable to Ocean Hill-Brownsville as well as to the other areas. This was not expected given the small area size and the focus on community control and resident involvement in that district. Further, it should be emphasized that the modicum of autonomy in Ocean Hill does not reflect itself in significantly higher levels of support for community control nor for a greater demand for complete resident power. This situation could, of course, be due to the barriers erected by the Board of Education. Hence, the unexpected result (in light of the public

attention focused on Ocean Hill) that degree of community autonomy discriminates residents' perspectives only minimally may very well be a function of political obstacles, that actual differences are less than theoretical ones. Also of relevance is the observation that experiments in community control appear to be associated with positive feelings expressed by staff and clients even where real control is not forthcoming.

Based on these results, we believe that the limitations imposed by political considerations combined with resident perspectives make an overlap model of community control a viable strategy. This approach, developed by Zurcher and Key (1968:85-96), considers involvement of the poor as most feasible when done cooperatively with expert outsiders. Apart from the advantages that would possibly accrue (e.g., minimizing stereotypes, improving self-esteem and confidence), there is a pragmatic recognition that the powerful are not going to transfer power willingly; however an operating assumption is that the poor can increase power shared with those in control without significantly reducing that segment's potential coercive ability.

Considering the obstacles stressed earlier by evaluation researchers, we must develop types of local autonomy which will be more acceptable to those in positions of power. An overlap model would be viewed as less of a threat since control would be linked to the existing power structure. In addition to support provided through Zurcher and Key's study of an Office of Economic Opportunity program in Topeka, Kansas, similar models are developed by Shostak (1965:1-5) who emphasizes "co-determination" and Rein and Reissman (1966:3-12) who describe "third party antipoverty intervention." Shared power by residents and non-residents is assumed in all three of these models.[21] It is essential, however, that we recognize the probability of a degree of conflict even over a

combined mode of control. As Marris and Rein (1973:295) stress, citizen participation can not be the only strategy for social change; it must be supplemented by other forms such as protests and legal action.[22]

Beyond the broad issue of power, the combined mode of control would appear substantively practical. As Gove and Costner (1970:286-287) observe, the organizational skills and technical expertise needed to operate programs are not characteristic of indigenous leaders and, therefore, could be provided for by expert non-residents. In parallel fashion, Rein (1972:692-693) asserts that even a somewhat conservative social service orientation (i.e., one which would not be directed primarily toward structural change) requires both citizen participation and professional services. The former emphasizes "legitimacy, public support, and a better understanding of what people want /whereas the latter stresses/ competence, efficient organization, standardization, /and/ accountability of funds."

As to type of change, the results would probably not harken radical shifts due to the political factors noted earlier. However, even when resident involvement is minimal as in providing information or carrying out non-professional roles rather than policy and decision-making, there appears to be better service for the poor (Orden, 1973: 380-381). Moreover, participation is viewed as desirable for it serves to create a sense of group identity and reduce sensations of powerlessness (Strange, 1972:659). As Gittell (1972:683) remarks, "Participation in itself provides an involvement with the system which can diminish alienation...This new role for the community is not conceived as an abandonment of professionalism, but rather an effort to achieve a proper balance..."[23]

The overlap model would thus tend to be reform oriented, working primarily through existing agencies and political bodies. It should be stressed, however,

that there is the potential for resident involvement that would result in institutional change. Participation allows for experience in government and political development which could represent an important resource for more change-oriented programs.[24] Given the political realities and the willingness of community residents in all three districts studied to work in concert with outsiders, a combined mode of community control would appear to be both potentially workable and desirable as one of a number of strategies incorporated into a program for change.

TABLE 1*

Community Identification by Type of Affiliation

Community Identification	Type of Affiliation: Staff	Clients	General Community
High	66.4%	49.3%	18.3%
Medium	30.7	45.1	62.1
Low	2.9	5.6	19.6
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(140)	(144)	(306)
C=	.405		

* All results are significant at the .05 level unless otherwise indicated. The chi square statistic, which is based on random sampling, has been modified to account for the greater sampling error characteristic of the cluster type actually used. For a discussion of this adjustment, see Kish (1965:161-164).

Table 2

Perceived Ability to Influence by Type of Affiliation and Income
0-$3999

Type of Affiliation

Perceived Ability to Influence	Staff	Clients	General Community
High	85.7%	80.4%	44.1%
Low	14.3	19.6	55.9
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(28)	(51)	(111)
C=	.359		

$4,000-9999

Type of Affiliation

Perceived Ability to Influence	Staff	Clients	General Community
High	86.4%	55.9%	63.4%
Low	13.6	44.1	36.6
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(66)	(59)	(172)
C=	.223		

$10,000 plus

Type of Affiliation

Perceived Ability to Influence	Staff	Clients	General Community
High	81.5%	84.6%	84.6%
Low	18.5	15.4	15.4
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(27)	(13)	(13)
C=	.042		

Table 3

Support for Community Control by Type of Affiliation

Support for Community Control	Type of Affiliation: Staff	Clients	General Community
High	46.3%	41.3%	12.6%
Medium	48.5	50.0	58.6
Low	5.2	8.7	28.8
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(134)	(138)	(278)
C=	0.370		

Table 4*

External and Local Trust
by Type of Affiliation

Type of Affiliation

Level of Trust	STAFF		CLIENTS		GENERAL COMMUNITY	
	Local Trust	External Trust	Local Trust	External Trust	Local Trust	External Trust
High	57.5%	40.0%	48.6%	43.4%	10.9%	17.3%
Medium	34.2	44.8	35.9	27.0	61.2	55.4
Low	8.3	15.2	15.5	29.6	27.9	27.3
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N=	(146)	(145)	(142)	(152)	(183)	(289)

*The Ns exceed the total number of cases since we are actually viewing two sets of relationships side by side (external trust by type of affiliation and local trust as it relates to this same variable).

Table 5

Local Trust by
Perceived Social Differentiation in Comparison With Local Staff

Trust	Social Differentiation (Perceived Standard of Living) Higher	Same	Lower
High	34.8%	41.1%	24.1%
Medium	50.6	46.9	40.2
Low	14.6	12.0	35.7
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(89)	(258)	(112)
G=	0.227		

Table 6*

Local Trust by Perceived Social Differentiation in Comparison with Local Staff and Type of Affiliation

Project Affiliates

Social Differentiation
(Perceived Standard of Living)

Trust	Higher	Same	Lower
High	38.9%	56.7%	50.0%
Medium	42.6	33.4	36.5
Low	18.5	9.9	13.5
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(54)	(171)	(52)
G=	-0.118		

General Community
Social Differentiation
(Perceived Standard of Living)

Trust	Higher	Same	Lower
High	28.6%	10.3%	1.7%
Medium	62.9	73.6	43.3
Low	8.5	16.1	55.0
	100%	100%	100%
N=	(35)	(87)	(60)
G=	0.679		

*Staff and clients are combined to form project affiliates. This is done since their views on these variables tend to be quite similar and cell frequencies are increased, allowing percentages to be more meaningful.

FOOTNOTES

1. These remarks are based on preliminary results from the author's current research in South Boston.

2. Although this issue is generally identified with cities, conceivably it could be broadened to deal with the question of autonomy within a more encompassing governmental sphere (e.g., city to megalopolis or state to federal government).

3. A similar point is stressed by Sennett (1970) in his criticism of certain urban planners. The tendency to develop plans based on rational-legal models is viewed as resulting in programs that do not meet the needs of the people.

4. The matter of the insider is actually more complicated than the single issue of insider or outsider viewpoints. The very terms are not so much persons as they are perspectives. Thus, it is not merely the question of varying orientations but of differential labeling of persons as being on the inside or outside. For a comparable discussion dealing with deviance and normality, see Goffman (1963).

5. Actual measures used will be discussed as each variable is presented.

6. The 41% undoubtedly reflects the educational requirement to secure a staff position.

7. Other socio-demographic factors tend not to be useful in differentiating the types of affiliation (i.e., sex, age, marital status, and ethnicity).

8. Respondents are asked initially to indicate whether they view their standard or way of living as being higher, the same, or lower in comparison with other residents. Although the resulting measure is neither associated with type of affiliation nor with mode of district control, it is related to both socio-economic status (i.e., income and education) and particular reference groups. For example, if we construct a table including only those people perceiving that they are at a lower SES in comparison with residents, local staff, and external staff, there is a marked tendency for the percentage of those perceiving a lower standard of living to increase as SES is lowered. Furthermore, residents view themselves increasingly at a lower level as we move from residents to external staff as the reference group.

Lower Perceived Differentiation by SES
(Standard of Living)

Social Differentiation	SES: Very Low	Low	Medium	High
Residents	33.0%	14.5%	8.7%	4.9%
Local Staff	42.2	26.8	19.8	9.6
External Staff	50.0	38.0	34.4	14.3

9. The actual item dealing with preferred mode of control offers these choices: 1. complete control by local people in all decisions concerning the community; 2. local people and people from outside the community both join in making community decisions; or 3. people from outside the community make all of the decisions, but community people help run the programs.

10. Type of affiliation does not affect this relationship.

11. In ascertaining the possible impact of perceived program familiarity on degree of commitment to community control, we note the absence of an association. Hence, it would seem that the greater support of the staff and clients is due to factors other than simply their knowledge of the projects.

12. With regard to projected staff viewpoint (the degree to which staff are viewed as liking or disliking area residents), respondents generally depicit a favorable picture. Ninety percent tend to project some level of liking.

13. The 85% figure reflects a combination of high and medium levels of trust.

14. This interpretation would seem to be similar to Sennett's (1970) belief that individuals often "know" others through stereotypes which are maintained by social barriers. He suggests that these divisive elements be removed, thereby forcing people to confront one another and to learn to understand through interaction. Of course, a confrontation between genuine conflicting ideologies and not just those assumed through stereotypes can result in maintaining divergent perspectives and low levels of trust.

15. This information is gathered by having each project administrator provide data on every employee as to residency, part or full-time work status, and professional-paraprofessional status.

16. Surprisingly, ethnicity, education, and length of residence are not meaningfully associated with the numerous bivariate relationships reported in this third set of resident perspectives.

17. The relationship between differentiation and external trust demonstrates more clearly the association since more of the residents see themselves as lower in standard of living.

18. Surprisingly, anticipated variations by control do not materialize, that is a higher level of trust and perception of social similarity in Ocean Hill.

19. It should be noted that the relationships described above dealing with local trust also hold for external trust. In examining the relevance of various test factors, we find that only type of affiliation exhibits some impact. All of the bivariate associations involving trust generally are retained when affiliation is incorporated. However, the critical cells vary for the general community and project affiliates (i.e., staff and clients). For the former, the independent variable discriminates most at the lower level of the dependent factor. For example, desire to influence (dependent variable) tends to be low regardless of degrees of trust (independent variable) on the part of the general community. Hence, it is only at the low need to influence level that trust is relevant. That is, those expressing a low need to influence clearly indicate the least faith (61%) in contrast to chose noting high (25%) or medium (26%) trust. For the staff and clients, the critical cells are those involving high need to influence. As a case in point, 80% of the staff feeling the greatest need to affect decisions

also indicate extensive faith in contrast to 54% of those expressing a minimal degree. For low influence, however, there is no significant difference for either the staff or clients.

20. To determine whether the respondents would be more familiar with individual projects, they were shown a card with each listed. The association between perceived familiarity and knowledge of particular projects approaches unity.

21. It should be stressed that community control as total autonomy is not necessarily a practical solution. As a case in point, Warren (1973:321-339) describes the inter-subjective blindness characterizing certain model cities program participants. He relates two strategies that could be applied in such projects: 1. service programs to help the poor who are seen as responsible for certain individual deficiencies or 2. structural changes to improve a system that is seen as dysfunctional in terms of inequities. Warren finds that governmental bureaucrats and resident groups gaining power adopt the first strategy. His explanation is that the existing thought structure has a well developed technology for dealing with the individual deficiency approach but not the systems inequity strategy. Thus simply having control will not necessarily result in radically different programs.

22. A cautionary note, however, is in order. For the broader community population, as represented through our general community sample, less favorable attitudes involving such factors as support for local autonomy and trust of personnel (regardless of their resi'ency) are evidenced; consequently, a concerted effort would be needed to gain their commitment

and involvement. Their lack of familarity with the projects reflects the seriousness of this problem, at least with regard to communication.

23. As to type of citizen participation, less significant involvement would be associated with an advisory role or paraprofessional employment of residents as opposed to citizen advocacy or social action (cf. Rein, 1972:698). Comparable points are suggested by Spiegel (1973:365-389) who contrasts offering information and negotiating with shared policy and decision-making responsibility.

24. If residents were to work in concert with skilled, sympathetic outsiders, a radical overlap model might be in evidence. This approach certainly is incorporated by the community involved in the Philadelphia Model Cities Program as well as by the administrators of Ocean Hill-Brownsville. Although neither program can be seen as producing major reforms (because of political obstacles), they do reflect the potential for a coalition directed toward institutional change.

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